



Lancaster County Broadband Authority
Minutes of Board Meeting
May 19, 2021

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1. Call to Order: Cassie Thompson called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. in the Board/Commission meeting room of the County Administration Building. Cassie Thompson, Cherie Kiser, Michele Craddock, and Dr. Robert Westbrook were present. Nicholas Pascaretti attended by video conference. Don Gill attended as a guest.

2. Public Comment: Cassie Thompson invited the public to make comments.

Charles Rusinak stated he and Wallace Dawson were advised by Jeff Beekhoo of BTS that due to technical problems he could not provide them with an update for the pending CARES Act trial. Mr. Beekhoo also advised that certain areas within the CARES Act service area might not receive service due to lack of coverage from the tower. Mr. Rusinak understood that Mr. Beekhoo intended to report on these issues to the LCBA at this meeting. Mr. Rusinak asked what the LCBA appeal process would be for qualified residents if they are denied service. Mr. Rusinak also submitted a document containing his comments. Mr. Rusinak's written comments are attached to these minutes. Cherie Kiser advised Mr. Rusinak that the information he requested, the meeting agenda and contact information for the Executive Director, Nicholas Pascaretti, were posted on LCBA's website.

3. Approval of Minutes: Michele Craddock made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2021 meeting. Cherie Kiser seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of the directors present.

4. Discussions:

- a. Jeff Beekhoo provided a briefing on the status of BTS' deployment of CARES ACT wireless project. BTS is testing the signal strength from the tower. The CARES ACT grant requires him to serve 300 homes within a 5 mile radius of the tower and he may have the capability to serve up to 700 homes. However, some homes may need extra equipment to receive the signal based on the tests and resulting heat mapping.

In response to the LCBA's questions, Mr. Beekhoo stated: that he expects to reach 300 homes as the grant requires; he indicated BTS would bear the costs of inexpensive additional equipment, but did not commit to who would bear the costs of more expensive equipment; he resolved the customer service issues; he has marketing material and is

ready to update his website to allow customers to sign up for service, but wants to have the service up and running before he puts it out there.

Mr. Rusinak, one of the 15 test customers stated that none of the test customers have been contacted by BTS. Mr. Beekhoo stated BTS will have to go to Mr. Rusinak house to test the signal. Mr. Rusinak was also concerned about whether BTS will comply with its obligations under its contract with LCBA. Cherie Kiser assured Mr. Rusinak that LCBA will make sure BTS complies with its contractual obligations.

- b. Michele Craddock made a motion to approve the Memo to the Board of Supervisors and the attachment. Cherie Kiser seconded the motion.

All directors present approved the motion by unanimous vote (3-0):

- Michele Craddock – voted in favor of the motion.
- Cherie Kiser – voted in favor of the motion.
- Cassie Thompson – voted in favor of the motion.

The remaining directors were not present at the meeting and therefore did not vote:

- Dr. Gary Silverman – absent
- Kevin Bean - absent

- c. Nicholas Pascaretti recommended the LCBA request the County to fund the \$575,000 contribution to the Dominion/APB project with the remaining CARES ACT funds. Don Gill stated he believes the Board of Supervisors intends to use the CARES ACT funds for that purpose. He also stated the Board of Supervisors has requested the LCBA meet with the Board of Supervisors for a joint working session 1 hour before their regularly scheduled meeting next week.
- d. **Closed Session:** At 5: p.m., we entered a closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A) 29, discussion of public contracts. The specific matters discussed were limited to the discussion of public contracts. The closed meeting concluded at 5:45 p.m. Each member certified that the matters specified above were the only matters discussed.
- e. Michele Craddock made a motion to decline the proposal submitted by BTS for management of the Lancaster County portion of the VATI project. Cherie Kiser seconded the motion. All directors present voted in favor of the motion.
- f. Nicholas Pascaretti reported on the status of the VATI grant project. The required grant positions for Lancaster County were filled as follows: Grant Manager, Cassie Thompson; Project Manager and Finance Manager, Nicholas Pascaretti; Attorney, James Cornwell.
- g. The directors discussed the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (“NTIA”) announcement of \$288 million in grant funding for broadband deployment grants. This program came about as a result of negotiations centering around

Congressman Wittman's Serving Rural America Act from last Congress. This legislation was included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021. These grants will be awarded to public-private partnerships (P3s), or partnerships between a state, or political subdivisions of a state, and providers of fixed broadband service.

Cherie Kiser reported NTIA expects awards to range between \$5M and \$30M, but this is not a required minimum or maximum. Covered partnerships requesting amounts outside of this range must provide a reasonable explanation for the variance in their project size. There is no cost sharing or matching funds requirement, but NTIA will favorably consider applications that propose to contribute a non-federal cost share of at least 10% of the total eligible costs of a project. Funds may only be used to cover allowable costs (construction or acquisition of facilities, equipment, long-term leases, engineering design, personnel costs, certain application expenses, etc.).

A covered partnership may only submit one application for the Broadband Infrastructure Program. NTIA will consider applications based on the following order of priority: (1) Covered broadband projects designed to provide broadband service to the greatest number of households in an eligible service area; (2) Covered broadband projects designed to provide broadband service in an eligible service area that is wholly within any area other than: (i) a county, city, or town that has a population of more than 50,000 inhabitants; and (ii) the urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to a city or town of more than 50,000 inhabitants; (3) Covered broadband projects that are the most cost-effective, prioritizing such projects in areas that are the most rural; (4) Covered broadband projects designed to provide broadband service with a download speed of not less than 100 megabits per second and an upload speed of not less than 20 megabits per second; and (5) Any other covered broadband project that meets the requirements of the NOFO. NTIA also is interested in ensuring that any broadband infrastructure deployed under this grant program will have the ability to evolve, sustain, and scale for future advanced services that will also be important to the U.S. economy.

4. Schedule next meeting and adjourned: Cherie Kiser made a motion to adjourn the meeting Cassie Thompson seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. The meeting adjourned at 5:55. The next regular meeting will be held on June 2, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. B. Craddock".

Secretary

Citizens Of Lancaster County
PO Box 786
Lancaster, Va. 22503

May 19, 2021

Ms. Cassie Thompson, Chair
Lancaster County Broadband Authority
8111 Mary Ball Road
Lancaster, Va. 22503

Ms. Thompson

I want to thank the Authority of posting the April, Minutes, they were complete and helpful.

On May 18th, Mr Dawson and I met with Jeff Beekhoo of BTS to get an update for the pending C.A.R.E.S Act trial. He advise that due to technical problems he could not provide this information. He also stated that this would be part of this report to the LCBA on May 19, 2021

During the discussion, he advised that certain area's within the approved C.A.R.E.S Act service area might not be able to receive the service to due to the lack of coverage from the Tower. He advised that this would be part of his report to LCBA on May 19, 2021.

If a qualified under served residence of District 1 or District 2 is denied service, what is the LCBA appeal process for denial of service?

Housekeeping items:

Will your agenda be posted or in the RR prior to your meetings?
Will the contact information for the Executive Director be available?

Thank you in advance.

Citizens Of Lancaster County

Charles Rusinak



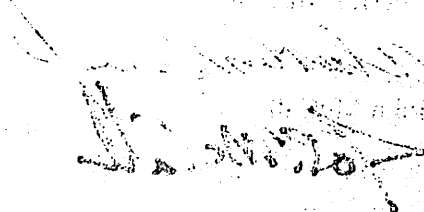
John McCalla



Wallace Dawson



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